

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Please substitute the attached replacement sheet for Figure 5 of the drawings as originally filed.

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REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

The abstract has been amended to overcome the objections. Please see the accompanying abstract. Applicants have also amended Figure 5 to correct minor errors. See the accompanying Replacement Drawing Sheet and Annotated sheet showing the changes.

By this Amendment, Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 2 to improve readability and added Claims 14 and 15 to provide specific protection for additional aspects of Applicants' invention. Claims 3-13 were previously cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, Claims 1, 2, 14, and 15 are pending.

Turning to the merits, Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,828,583 to Bush. Without acceding to the rejection, Claim 1 has been amended to set forth certain distinctive features of Applicants' invention more precisely. At least as presently amended, Claim 1 clearly distinguishes patentably from Bush.

Independent Claim 1 now sets forth an error rate determining method in which a first predetermined value is cumulatively added to a total value in the event of

detecting a first detection signal indicating non-existence of an error in a plurality of pieces of data stored in a semiconductor memory device, and in which a second predetermined value greater than the first predetermined value is subtracted from the total value in the event of detecting a second detection signal indicating existence of an error in the pieces of data.

It is apparent that Bush fails to teach or suggest at least the aforementioned features of independent Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 1, and Claim 2 dependent thereon, should now be allowed.

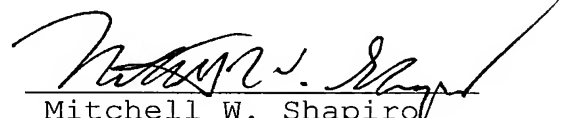
Independent Claim 14, while of different scope than independent Claim 1, is allowable at least for reasons similar to those presented above for Claim 1. Claim 15 is allowable at least based on its dependence from independent Claim 14.

In view of the forgoing, Applicants respectfully solicit a Notice of Allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-9485A) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


Mitchell W. Shapiro
Reg. No. 31,568

Miles & Stockbridge, P.C.
1751 Pinnacle Drive
Suite 500
McLean, Virginia 22102-3833
(703) 903-9000

Patrick L. Miller
Reg. No. 57,502

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